DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 088 199 EA 005 933

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TITLE	Characteristics of School Districts Related to Implementation of Year-Round Schools.
PUB DATE	Apr 74
NOTE	20p.; Paper presented at American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting (59th, Chicago, Illinois, April 15-19, 1974)
AVAILABLE FROM	Walter A. Hunt, 1511 Narcissus Street, Salem, Virginia 24153 ($2.00)
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.75 HC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Educational Research; Elementary Schools; *Extended School Year; *Feasibility Studies; *Predictor Variables; *Program Development; Secondary Schools; Selection; Speeches; *Year Round Schools

ABSTRACT

In this speech, the author discusses a study made that attempted to determine if there are differences in characteristics among school districts that implement full-scale models of year-round schools, districts that implement restricted models of year-round schools, and districts that do not implement any year-round model. Concurrently, he considers the answers to some basic questions concerning year-round schools. The study investigated only public school districts in the United States in which a year-round feasibility study had been completed during the period 1963 through May 31, 1973. Findings indicate that the attitudes of teachers, administrators, parents, students, and the business community toward implementation of year-round schools is important in predicting whether or not year-round programs will be put into operation. The author contends that no list of characteristics of school districts could be made that would be valid in predicting whether or not a district would implement year-round schools after a feasibility study. Included is a list of the school districts that were investigated in the study. (Author/DN)

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ED 088199

CHARACTERISTICS OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS RELATED TO IMPLEMENTATION OF YEAR-ROUND SCHOOLS

For Presentation at
1974 Annual Meeting
of AERA

As Part of a
Symposium on Current Research
on Year-Round Education

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by
Walter A. Hunt

EA 005 933

CHARACTERISTICS OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS RELATED TO IMPLEMENTATION OF YEAR-ROUND SCHOOLS, 1963-73

During the last ten years availability of federal and state funds for educational changes in the public schools has pressured school districts into developing innovative or exemplary programs. Pressure for change during this same period of time has come also from school boards, administrators, teachers, students, and local taxpayers. Year-round schools, as a vehicle for change, has received a great deal of attention from groups at all governmental levels. As a result of this attention, 53 public school districts throughout the nation have feasibility studies in progress at the present time, 117 have completed studies, and 51 have year-round programs in operation in one or more schools.

The Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine the differences in the characteristics of school districts that completed feasibility studies on year-round schools during the last ten years. More precisely, the writer endeavored to determine if there were differences in characteristics of school districts that implemented Full-Scale Models of year-round schools, districts that implemented Restricted Models of year-round schools, and districts that did not implement

any year-round model. Concurrently, the answers to some basic questions concerning year-round schools were also sought. (1) Are a rapid increase in student population, the physical size of the district, or racial composition of the community related to implementation of year-round schools? (2) Does the availability of federal and state funds pressure districts to undertake research that may not be directly beneficial to the district? (3) Is lack of local financial support related to the quest to obtain maximum use of buildings throughout the year? (4) Are improvements in curriculum, improvement of instruction, and improvement in learning situations for students motivators for research concerning year-round schools? (5) Does the attitude of all sectors of the community affect decisions to implement year-round programs? (6) Who are the prime movers in initiating studies and making changes? (7) Are more year-round programs operational in elementary schools than at the secondary level? (8) Can an analysis of the characteristics of school districts that have studied year-round schools provide guidelines for other school districts that wish to investigate the concept?

Significance

The basic concept of year-round schools has different meanings for different people. Consequently, misinformation about and inappropriate comparisons of year-round schools are

widespread. This study provides a clear definition of the year-round concept and subdivides it into Full-Scale and Restricted Models. Full-Scale Models require Constant Attendance of students. That is, the number of students enrolled in a school from its own attendance area does not vary more than ten percent throughout the year. In Restricted Models the number of students enrolled in a school from its own attendance area varies more than ten percent some time during the year. The use of these definitions in research can prevent confusion and provide reliable data for comparisons to be made.

No research that this writer found attempts to investigate the relationship of characteristics of school districts to implementation of year-round schools. This study examined the year-round concept in a way that will help to determine this relationship.

Procedure

A series of steps was followed in conducting the study. First, an extensive effort was made to determine which public school districts in the United States had completed a feasibility study on year-round schools during the ten year period, 1963-73, and which districts had implemented a year-round program during the same period of time. In order to identify these school districts, the chief officer

in each state department of education was requested to complete a questionnaire which was constructed to provide the needed information. The information received from this survey was validated by sources in the bibliography of this dissertation, by correspondence with the superintendent of schools of each district identified, by data collected by the National Council on Year-Round Education, and by Bruce Campbell's research document on year-round schools in the United States published in April, 1973.

The second step was the construction of an instrument to send to the superintendent of schools of each district that had conducted a feasibility study on year-round schools. Part one contained items to be answered by the superintendents of all districts that had completed feasibility studies. Part two contained items to be completed by the superintendents of districts that had implemented a year-round program in one or more schools. The content of this instrument was validated by eleven public school educators in Virginia who were knowledgeable concerning year-round schools, and by three members of the advisory committee for this dissertation.

The third step of the study was to send a questionnaire to the superintendent of schools in each district that had been identified as a member of the population from which to gather data. The fourth step included a check on the validity of responses received from the superintendents.

Publications from the U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and from the U. S. Office of Education were used to check factual data. Other data were validated by using information from feasibility studies published by the districts themselves and by a search of the literature on year-round schools.

The fifth step was preparation of a plan for scoring data received from the various districts. In this plan variables were divided into two, three, and four categories and each category assigned a weight of 1,2; 1,2,3; or 1, 2, 3, 4. In the sixth step general factor analysis and Chi-square tests of independence were used to analyze data.

The information received from the analysis of data was used in the seventh and final step to test the three hypotheses expressed at the beginning of this study.

Delimitations

The study was limited in three ways. First it investigated only public school districts in which a year-round feasibility study had been completed. Second, it was limited to the period of years 1963 through May 31, 1973. Third, the population under study may or may not be representative of all public school districts in the United States.

Findings

The attitude of teachers, administrators, parents, students, and business/industry in a community toward imple-

mentation of year-round schools is important in predicting whether year-round programs will be put into operation. It is not a valid prediction of whether a Full-Scale or Restricted Model will be implemented.

Elementary school districts are more likely to implement year-round schools than secondary or K-12 districts.

Full-Scale Models are more likely to be implemented in elementary school than Restricted Models. Restricted Models are more likely to be implemented in secondary schools.

Districts that implement Full-Scale Models are more likely to use local money for implementation than those that implement Restricted Models. Those districts that implement Restricted Models are more likely to receive federal or state funds to help put year-round plans into operation.

Conclusions and Discussion

On the basis of the evidence in this study several conclusions are warranted:

1. No list of characteristics of school districts can be made that will be valid for predicting whether or not a district will implement year-round schools after a feasibility study.

2. No list of characteristics of school districts can be made that will be valid for predicting whether or not districts that implement year-round schools will use a Full-Scale or Restricted Model.

3. Attitude of teachers, administrators, parents, students, and business/industry toward year-round schools is the best predicator of whether or not a district will implement a year-round program. This fact should serve as a warning to initiators of year-round school studies. If implementation of a year-round program is the goal, the people in the district must be convinced that year-round schools are the best way to improve education for students or the least damaging of several alternatives. This usually requires involving a large number of people in the study and clearly defining for the entire community how all of its traditional institutions will be affected. The changes necessary on the part of the family, the church, the government, business, and the schools have to be weighed against natural resistance to change and against advantages that will accrue.

4. Federal or state money is used more frequently to implement Restricted Models of year-round schools than to implement Full-Scale Models. This may be because Restricted Models, due to their voluntary attendance periods, cost more to implement than Full-Scale Models.

5. It is easier to implement a Full-Scale Model in elementary schools than in secondary schools. This may be due to the rigid fashion in which secondary schools are organized and to the rigid nature of curriculum requirements.

6. Implementation of year-round schools or the type of model implemented is not a direct result of:

a. Overcrowding in schools

b. Desiring to get better use of buildings

c. Desiring to avoid double shifts

d. Desiring to save money

e. Desiring to improve the curriculum

f. Desiring to improve instruction

g. Desiring to initiate educational change

h. Desiring to provide for acceleration of students

i. Desiring to provide for remediation of students

j. Choosing boards of education and superintendents by election or appointment

k. Having a high concentration of minority groups

l. Having bond referenda defeated

m. Having bond referenda passed

n. Reaching the maximum bonding limit

o. Having school taxes levied by school boards

p. Being large or small in physical or population size

q. Having a high percent of high school graduates going to college or working at full time jobs

r. Having a rapid increase in student population

s. Having colleges with schools of education within or in close proximity to the district

t. Desiring to use federal and state money

u. Having a particular group initiate or participate in the study

A large number of school districts in this study that met most of these specifications did not implement year-round schools to help solve their problems. Some districts looked for solutions in other ways and some chose to live with their problems. The above characteristics will not differentiate between school districts that implement year-round schools after a feasibility study and those that do not or between those that implement a Full-Scale Model and those that implement a Restricted Model. Because this study did not yield a list of characteristics of school districts that could be used for predictive purposes does not nullify the use of the results for other reasons. Analysis of data herein points toward several interesting facts:

1. That attitudes of people rather than any concrete evidence of effects upon the education of students (which is contradictory and not conclusive for year-round schools at this time) will determine the direction a school district will take concerning year-round programs.

2. That changes are easier to make at the elementary level than at the secondary level.

3. That when federal and state money are available, districts are more willing to innovate. Conversely, districts are more reluctant to spend local money to make changes that are still in the experimental stage.

4. That Full-Scale Models of year-round schools cost less than Restricted Models.

5. That year-round programs may be implemented without radically changing the curriculum of the schools.

Recommendations

On the basis of the data in this study and a knowledge of year-round school operation in public schools throughout the United States, the following recommendations are presented:

1. That clear operational definitions be used by all researchers in collecting information on year-round schools in order to obtain a body of data that can be used for comparison purposes. The need for clear, concise definitions is readily apparent when the literature concerning year-round schools is reviewed. This is illustrated by the fact that one source list sixty-seven different models of year-round programs.[1]

2. Further research including the fifty-three districts with studies still in progress be devoted to the task of developing a list of characteristics or specifications to guide school districts in making decisions about year-round schools.

3. In-depth research of the people in a district involved in a feasibility study on year-round schools be made

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[1]Utica Community Schools, The Four-Quarter Staggered School Year 1/4+1/4+1/4+1/4=365 A Feasibility Study to Extend the School Year (Utica, Michigan: Utica Community Schools, 1970) p. iv and Appendix D pp. 1-51.

to determine why the district did or did not implement year-round programs.

4. Further research be made to determine what effects year-round schools have on students.

Table 9

Districts Listed by States That Completed Feasibility Studies but Did Not Implement Year-Round Schools, 1963-73

State	Name of School District	Date Study Was Completed
Alaska	Anchorage Borough School District	Aug. 1972
Arizona	Mesa Public Schools	Aug. 1972
	Phoenix Union High School District	June 1971
	Scottsdale High School District*	Nov. 1971
	Sunnyside School District #12	Jan. 1972
	Tucson School District #1	Dec. 1971
California	Rowland Unified School District*	1972
	San Juan Unified School District	Jan. 1973
	Santa Rosa City Schools*	1967
	Simi Valley Unified School District	Spring 1972
Colorado	Adams County School District #12	Sept. 1972
	Littleton Public Schools #6	Feb. 1972
	Widefield School District #3	Dec. 1972
Florida	Polk County*	1968
Idaho	Boise Independent School District #1	Mar. 1972
Illinois	Waukegan Community Unit School District #60	Feb. 1973
Iowa	Clinton Community School District	April 1970
	Urbandale Community Schools	May 1972
	Western Dubuque Community School District	1972
Maine	MSAD #15 Gray-New Gloucester*	Summer 1971
	Westbrook Schools	Nov. 1971

Table 9 (continued)

State	Name of School District	Date Study Was Completed
Maryland	Harford County	Feb. 1972
Massachusetts	Cohassett*	1970
	Framingham*	1971
	Rockland*	1972
	Westborough*	1971
Michigan	Ann Arbor School District*	1970
	Freeland School District*	1970
	Port Huron School District	Jan. 1972
	Utica School District	June 1970
Missouri	Hazelwood School District	Mar. 1972
N. Hampshire	Keene School District	Aug. 1972
New Jersey	Belleville	May 1972
	Black Horse Pike Regional	May 1972
	East Orange*	1971
	Hanover Park Regional High School District*	1972
	Madison Township	April 1970
N. Mexico	Alamorgordo Public Schools*	Dec. 1972
New York	Commack Public Schools	Aug. 1969
	Syosset Public Schools	Oct. 1969
N. Dakota	Bismarck Public School District #1	Spring 1971
	Grand Forks Public School District #1	Dec. 1968
Ohio	Cincinnatti City Public Schools*	1967
Oklahoma	Healdton Independent #55	May 1973
	Moore Public Schools	Feb. 1973

Table 9 (continued)

State	Name of School District	Date Study Was Completed
Oregon	Beaverton Schools #48	Sept. 1972
	Portland Public Schools	Nov. 1971
	Salem Public School District #24J	Mar. 1972
	Tigard School District*	1970
	West Linn Public Schools	Feb. 1973
Rhode Island	Cranston School District*	March 1972
	Narragansett School District*	Jan. 1973
	North Kingstown School District*	Jan. 1973
S. Carolina	Florence Public School District #1	Sept. 1972
	Richland County School District #1	Aug. 1972
	Spartanburg School District*	Aug. 1972
Tennessee	Memphis City Schools	May 1972
	Montgomery-Clarksville School District*	( )†
Vermont	Chittenden South School District #14	May 1971
Wisconsin	Burlington Area School District	June 1972
	Hamilton Joint School District	July 1971
	Milwaukee Public Schools	March 1973
	Oconomowoc School District #3*	1971
	Plymouth Joint School District #8	June 1972
	Port Washington Public Schools	Oct. 1971
	Racine Unified School District #1	Feb. 1972

*These districts are not included in this study.

†Date of completion not known.

Table 10

Districts Included in This Study That Implemented Year-Round Schools, 1963-73

State	Name of School District	Date of Implementation
Arizona	Roosevelt School District #66	July 1973
	Yuma School District #70	June 1973
California	ABC Unified School District	Sept. 1971
	Bear Valley Unified School District	July 1972
	Berryessa Union School District	July 1972
	Chula Vista City School District	July 1971
	Corona-Norco Unified School District	July 1972
	Escondido Union School District	July 1972
	Fountain Valley Elementary School District	Feb. 1973
	Hesperia Elementary School District	July 1972
	La Mesa-Spring Valley School District	July 1971
	Old Adobe Union School District	July 1972
	Pajaro Valley Unified School District	July 1972
	San Joaquin School District	July 1972
	Santee School District	July 1972
Colorado	Cherry Creek #5	Sept. 1972
	Jefferson County Public School District	July 1973
Florida	Pasco County School District	July 1973
Georgia	Atlanta Public Schools	Sept. 1968
Illinois	Valley View District #365	June 1970
Kentucky	Jefferson County School District	Sept. 1972

Table 10 (continued)

State	Name of School District	Date of Implementation
Michigan	East Lansing School District*	Jan. 1972
	Haslett School District	Jan. 1972
	Okemos School District	Jan. 1972
Minnesota	Mora Public Schools	July 1971
Missouri	Francis Howell School District	July 1969
Montana	Missoula County School District	June 1973
Nevada	Clark County School District	Jan. 1973
	Washoe County Schools	July 1972
New Hampshire	Union #27	Sept. 1972
North Carolina	Buncombe County Public Schools	Sept. 1972
	Winston-Salem/Forsyth	July 1971
Oregon	Gresham Grade School District #4	July 1972
Pennsylvania	Fairview School District	Jan. 1973
	Rochester Area Schools	Sept. 1971
South Carolina	Rock Hill School District #3	Aug. 1973
Texas	Fort Worth Ind. School District	Aug. 1970
Utah	Nebo School District	Aug. 1972
Virginia	Loudoun County Public Schools	July 1973
	Prince William County Schools	June 1970
	Virginia Beach City Schools	June 1973
Washington	Franklin Pierce School District #402	Sept. 1969

*East Lansing, Haslett, and Okemos jointly operate year-round schools.

Table 11

Districts Not Included in This Study That Implemented Year-Round Schools, 1963-73

State	Name of District
California	Hayward Unified School District
	Lakeside Union Elementary School District
	Ocean View Elementary School District
	San Diego City Unified School District
Florida	Dade County School District
	Hernando County School District
Illinois	Chicago City Schools
Michigan	Northville School District
Oregon	Molalla Elementary School District

Table 12

Districts With Studies of Year-Round Schools in Progress, June 1, 1973

State	Name of School District
Arizona	Apache Junction Schools
	Buckeye District #33
	Elroy District #11
	Flagstaff Public Schools
	Kyrene District #28
	Peoria District #11
	Tolleson Union High School District #214
California	Elk Grove Unified School District
Colorado	Boulder Balley Re-2
	Colorado Springs District #11
Illinois	Dixon Public Schools
	Dundee Community Unit School District #300
	Lake Park T.H.S.D. #108
	Markham School District #144
	Meredian Community Unit School District
	Peoria Public School District
	Pontiac Community Consolidated Schools
	Posen-Robbins District #143 1/2
	Washington Community High School District
	Waterloo Community Unit School District #5
Maryland	Carroll County Schools
	Frederick County Schools
Massachusetts	Bellingham School District
	Marchfield School District
Nebraska	Papillion Public Schools
Nevada	Carson City School District

Table 12 (continued)

State	Name of School District
New Jersey	Delran Township School District
	Gloucester Township School District
	Long Branch School District
	Monroe Township School District
	Mt. Laurel Township School District
	Tenafly School District
	Warren Hills Regional School District
	Washington Township School District
New Mexico	Roswell Public Schools
	Santa Fe Public Schools
Ohio	Butler County Schools
Pennsylvania	Butler Area School District
	Central Bucks School District
	Gateway School District
	Manheim Township School District
	Neshaminy School District
	State College Area School District
	Wissahickon School District
Rhode Island	Foster-Glocester School District
Tennessee	Hamilton County Schools
	Knox County Schools
Texas	Houston Independent School District
Utah	Granite School District
Virginia	Richmond City Schools
	Roanoke County Schools
	York County Schools
Wisconsin	Union Grove High School District